IMT Nuremberg Archives

H – 1018

International Court of Justice

H1018 - 0002

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF TESTIMONY FOR THE DEFENSE OF ORGANIZATIONS, TAKEN BEFORE A COMMISSION APPOINTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH ~~x~~ 4 OF THE ORDER OF THE TRIBUNAL DATED 13 MARCH 1946.

19 July 1946.

COMMISSIONER:

M. Martin-Havard.

THE S. S.

(THE COMMISSION CONVENED AT 1410 HOURS.)

GENERAL OBERST PAUL HAUSSER, a witness, took the stand and testified as follows:

BY THE COMMISSIONER:

Q What is your name?

A Paul Hausser.

Q Raise your right hand and repeat the following oath after me:

I swear by God, the Almighty and Omniscient, that I will speak the pure truth and will withhold and add nothing.

(The witness repeated the oath.)

THE COMMISSIONER: You may sit down.

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY DR. PELCKMANN:

Q Witness, what was your last position in the service and your last rank?

A My last rank was that of a General Oberst and I was Commander-in-Chief of Army Group G in the southern part of the Western Front.

Q What rank did you occupy when you left the Reichswehr?

A I left the Reichswehr on the 1st of February 1932 and at that time I had

H1018-0003

the rank of a "General Lieutenant."

Q How did you come to the SS Verfuegungstruppe?

A I joined the Stahlhelm organization in the year 1933. At that time I was not a member of the Party. I was then transferred to the Reserve of the SA and at a congress of the leaders I met Gruppenfuehrer Scharfe who called the attention of the Reichsfuehrer-SS Himmler to me. In the fall of 1934 I received an order from Himmler to organize the SS-Junker School at Braunschweig.

Q So you became a member of the Verfuegungstruppe of the SS in 1934, yes or no?

A Yes.

Q Could your position in the SS Verfuegungstruppe before the war be considered as a key position.

A From the year 1936 onwards I was not commander of the Verfuegungstruppe but Inspector of the Verfuegungstruppe and it was my task to take care of the education and instruction of this Troop, with the exception of the so-called Leibstandarte. Apart from that, problems of organization, according to the orders of Himmler, came under my jurisdiction.

Q Whose idea was it to set up this Verfuegungstruppe and for what purpose was it set up?

A I did not witness the beginning of this Troop. I only know that it became sort of a body-guard and emanated from the Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler. Later on a few other battalions were set up particularly for representative tasks and probably also for the purpose of leading the many unemployed to a regular life.

Q Was the ordinary SS not sufficient for this task and why not?

A As far as I know the SS was neither, as regards quantity and as regards appearance, sufficient for these tasks. We wanted a special troop for this purpose.

Q Was it the intention of the order of August 17, 1938, Document 647-PS, USA Exhibit 443, - was it the purpose of this order to create a new troop apart

H1018-0004

from the Ordinary-SS?

A No. This order was meant to clarify the uncertain position of the existing troop and it was especially on the initiative of the OKH (The Supreme Command of the Army). This order provided for the specific tasks of the several contingencies which were mentioned in this order; for instance it stipulated that they were neither a part of the police or a part of the Wehrmacht. They were a permanent troop and that compulsory military service could be done in this troop.

Q Was this order meant to be a general connection between the Ordinary-SS the Totenkopfverbanden (Death Head Unit) and the Verfuegungstruppe?

A No, on the contrary, the order clearly distinguished between the tasks of the several contingencies and so there was no connection.

Q Could this order be interpreted in the sense that the Death Head Unit and the Verfuegungstruppe were true to the State, whereas the Ordinary-SS had more of a Party character?

A Yes, that is right.

Q Was the SS Verfuegungstruppe meant to be a political nucleus?

A No, it had nothing to do with politics; only its members had a right to choose. It was merely an attempt. In this troop all the virtues of a soldier should be combined with the new thoughts of the present.

Q Does that refer to relation between officer and enlisted man?

A Yes, reference to all social questions, better connection between officer and enlisted man, stressing of comradeship and unity, a rejection of any exclusivity and a rejection of the privilege for education.

Q Did the leaders of the Verfuegungstruppe ever try to promote the thought of an aggressive war and to educate the Verfuegungstruppe in this sense?

A No. The tasks of the young troop demanded for a long period of peace. The

H1018-0005

commanders were all veterans of the first world war and they did not wish to repeat this war.

Q At that time you were Inspector of the Verfuegungstruppe and I think you had the rank of a Standartenfuehrer?

A Yes.

Q In this capacity had you any knowledge of the tactical assignment of the Verfuegungstruppe in case of war?

A My task consisted only in the education and instruction of the troop and had nothing to do with its assignment.

Q Were there any preparations within the Verfuegungstruppe for assignment before the war?

A There were no such preparations before the war. We were not ready for war. We had no heavy arms, we had no reserve officers, no reserve enlisted men, no general staff.

Q Had you any connection with the General Staff of the Wehrmacht?

A No, not with the General Staff of the Wehrmacht, only on questions of organization and instruction, because the instruction of the Verfuegungstruppe was subject to jurisdiction of the army.

Q Were there any discussions within the Verfuegungstruppe as to the aggression against neighboring states or were there any discussions with other organizations under the jurisdiction of Himmler?

A We had no such discussion. We did not discuss this point. I have already stressed the point that our tasks demanded for a long period of peace.

Q What were the relations of the Verfuegungstruppe before the war towards the other organizations which were under the influence of Himmler?

A We had only one thing in common, that was the command of Heinrich Himmler. We had all our own tasks. Our relations to the Ordinary-SS were only of a local

H1018-0006

nature and especially in the field of comradeship. With all other organizations we had no relations. I may say that I have spoken perhaps twelve words with Heydrich in my whole life.

Q Were the members of the Verfuegungstruppe recruited from the Ordinary-SS?

A Only in 1933 when the troop was set up, a part of it was recruited from the Ordinary-SS. Then we set up propaganda agencies and we recruited our members from the part of the population which was due for military service. In particular all officers and commanders came from the old Wehrmacht and from the Party but not from the Ordinary-SS.

Q Was there a special Supreme Command provided for the Waffen-SS in the war and what were the relations towards the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht.

A The Waffen-SS had for its assignment no Supreme Command of its own. Only in the administrative office, the so-called Fuehrungshauptamt, for some fields of activity the members of the Waffen-SS became, when the war started, members of the Army. During my 5½ years at the Front I received orders only from the Army agencies.

Q What was the competence of Himmler as regards the Waffen-SS in war?

A We were only subordinate to Heinrich Himmler in questions of personnel jurisdiction. As regards reserves and clothing, there was a special signal service for this purpose.

Q Was there a definite plan for the recruitment of the Waffen-SS as regards quantity and was it planned that the number of SS men should not exceed 10% of the army strength?

A I think that the increment did not correspond to a plan. It was a consequence of the fact that these divisions had proved to be good soldiers and that in the course of the war and especially during crises the soldier had to go through many proofs and he had to be a good soldier. In addition to that we had, from 1943

H1018 - 0007

onwards, divisions which consisted of volunteers of the Nordic countries, of so-called Volksdeutsche (members of the German people) and volunteers from the Eastern and from the Balkan States. At that time too we never exceeded the 10% of the Army.

Q In your capacity as a soldier, and here I want to refer to the preceding question, whom did you consider as your direct commander, Himmler or Hitler?

(2)

A Our Supreme Commander was Hitler. We always reserved ourselves a certain criticism towards Himmler.

Q Was the greater part of the Waffen-SS volunteers?

II (1)

A In peace time, yes. In war time part of the Waffen-SS was recruited by virtue of the so-called emergency law (Notstandsgesetz.) The rest of them were volunteers with the following exceptions: In the year 1941, ~~xxxx~~ one division received 800 reservists from the army; in the year 1942 in the divisions which were placed under my command, there was perhaps already one-third of drafted men, that is to say, not volunteers. The number of drafted men increased in the year 1943 to almost one-half. In the year 1944 it probably exceeded one-half.

Q Were the volunteer recruitments based on ideological grounds?

A No, these men were much too young in order to understand that. They were looking for a good troop, which was recognized. They wanted to serve a mechanized or armored troop.

Q These young men of whom you speak came, I think, from labor camps and from Hitler Youth?

A They were young men who had to do military service and who had already done labor service and were members of the Hitler Youth.

Q As regards the Wehrmacht, was it just like that, that the young men they recruited were from the labor camps and from the Hitler Youth?

6

H1018-0008

A Yes, it was the same procedure also in the army, volunteers which were in most cases assigned to mechanized divisions, armored divisions, parachutists, and so on.

Q Was the Waffen-SS educated with a view to specially cruel fighting and were such methods of cruel fighting taught in the education?

A I must answer that with a clear "No." The instructions was supervised and directed by the Army. The commanders knew very well that this new troop had still to prove their qualities. It was also the demand of Heinrich Himmler who always said: "I request decency in life and in fight." I think at least the commanders have done this as regards to their own person.

Q In the years 1943 and 1944 it is difficult still to speak of a "young" troop. Do you think this is the reason why the decent methods of fighting these principles announced by Himmler, xxxx have changed?

A The tremendous growth of the troop of course deteriorated the efficiency and personality of the troop. In the year 1940 we had 3 divisions. There were always new formations and in the long run we had already 30 divisions. In addition to that we had difficulties with the volksdeutsche (members of the German people) and volunteers who did not properly know the German language, so that the divisions we had at the end cannot be compared with the divisions we had in the beginning. This would be the case everywhere after a long war.

Q Can you say, in spite of this, that the principle was still not to violate International Law and not to fight cruelly?

A The principles, according to the Geneva Convention and to the Hague Convention, remained the same. I unfortunately remember a speech made by Heinrich Himmler, in 1943, in which he mentioned the word "terror." It was meant terror which should proceed our troops. I told him that our success did not depend on terror but on every man doing his best. Besides it was stupid to speak of xxxx

H1018-0009

terror, for an enemy who knows about that is so much the tougher.

Q Was the Commissar Order (Kommissarbefehl) executed by the Waffen-SS?

A The Commissar Order was only passed as Chefsache to the general commands. In 1941 the Waffen-SS had no general commands of its own. I personally did not receive this order from General Command of the Army. I only received an order, much later, which spoke about the separation of the Commissars. We could not recognize the Commissars. I cannot remember one single case in which the capture of a Commisar was reported. Whenever they were recognized as such the fact was madd known by the report of another prisoner.

Q Could one say that the violation of the principles of human dignity were a consequence of the expressions of Himmler?

A I have already mentioned the speech of 1943. Heinrich Himmler almost never spoke to a troop as such. He only spoke to a part of his commanders and leaders who were in a position to translate his often very strong words into the language of the soldier.

Q Do you think there were other reasons why violations of International Law and excesses against human dignity should take place?

A In a long war such things always happen. The persons who committed such crimes were also punished according to the laws of the army. Of course toward the end of the war the young commanders of companies, with short experience in the army, had a bad influence on the whole situation.

Q Do you think that this was also the reason that the enemy were also very tough and violated certain conventions?

COMMISSIONER MARTIN-HAVARD: This question is entirely immaterial. We are faced with the problem of ascertaining whether the organizations accused were criminal or not. Will you please pass on to the next question?

H1018-0010

DR. PELCKMANN: I shall pass on to the next question but I should like to be permitted to explain why I have put this question.

COMMISSIONER MARTIN-HAVARD: I think that we have only a very short time and as the whole question is immaterial it is overruled and I request you to pass on to the next question.

Q How far went the psychological influence of Himmler on the Waffen-SS?

A I think that Himmler wanted to teach the Waffen-SS his ideological opinions. A troop which is on the front has a very critical sense as regards expressions of leaders in the Homeland. For the most part the utterances of Himmler had no great influence on the troops because they were passed on to the troops through intermediation of the commanders and they knew what to tell the soldiers.

Q Could you quote the attitude of Heinrich Himmler as hostile to the troop? Was it recognized as such by the troop itself?

A Heinrich Himmler by all means was an officer but he had no idea of military tasks proper and he under-estimated the real work within a troop and within a general staff. This the troops knew and accordingly had their own opinion of him.

Q How can it be explained that in spite of the lack of knowledge of Heinrich Himmler, the troops performed such good feats?

A In the beginning the troops consisted entirely of volunteers who had a very strong sense of cooperation and the relationship between leaders and led was excellent. The instructors were men who came from the Regular Army and had experience from the first world war and used that experience to train the new troops.

Q What was the relationship of the Waffen-SS to the police activities of Heinrich Himmler, especially relating to the Gestapo and the concentration camps?

A We had no connection whatever with these organizations. It was an intentional deceit of Heinrich Himmler that these guards in the concentration camps were called Waffen-SS, for budgetary reasons only because they were only relieved from service

H1018 -0011

with the Wehrmacht for that reason. There was no exchange of personnel and there were no contacts with the Gestapo, Sipo and SD either.

Q Were the guard companies in the concentration camps just referred to called Waffen-SS as well?

A That expression was used in the central agencies in Berlin. During the actions I never knew that they were calling themselves Waffen-SS.

Q Did the Verfuegungstruppe or the Waffen-SS either before the war or during the war have any police function and did Higher-SS and Police officials belong to the leadership?

A The Verfuegungstruppe and Waffen-SS never performed police tasks, only the Death Head Brigades before the war. The Higher-SS and Police Leaders were Generals of Police. Only in the year 1944 these generals became SS Generals too when Himmler became Supreme Commander of the Home Army and as such got control of the prison camps of the Wehrmacht; according to the general convention, these were supposed to be only members of the armed forces.

Q What did you know during the war about the so-called Einsatzgruppe or "disposition squads?"

A I knew the same as probably the leaders of the Regular Army knew, that is, that Himmler put parts of the SD into the ranks of the Regular Army with the task to requisition material and supervise the civil population. Only during my imprisonment did I learn that within these Einsatzgruppe were also small parts of the Waffen-SS, altogether perhaps three or four companies, that is 600 men, for real protective tasks.

Q Was the fighting against the partisans a special task of the Waffen-SS?

A That fighting was not a special task of the Waffen-SS. The fight against the partisans was a matter of military police far behind the lines which was

H1018 - 0012

performed by agencies of the Army, by security divisions, by Landesschutzenverbaende, as well by generals of the army as by local leaders of the SS and Police, with police regiments, and in exceptional cases also with Waffen-SS if it was just in the area. x The divisions themselves always were used at the front.

Com B
2 - 2
Cook
1500 - 1600
19 July 1946
Hausser

H1018 - 0013

CROSS EXAMINATION

BY MR. ELWYN JONES:

Q Witness, you joined the Verfruegungstruppe in 1934, didn't you?

A Yes, as a commander of that school in 1934.

Q Did you tell them how they ought to carry out the killing of these Jews in 1934? Was that part of the training you gave them in your Verfruegungstruppe school?

A On the 13th of June, 1934, I was in the SA reserve of the officers and I was not an SS man yet.

XI0(1)

Q When did you join? Which month did you join?

A The first of November, 1934.

Q You knew that the SS by then already had a lot of blood on it's hands, didn't you?

A When I joined?

Q Yes.

A Only that blood that was shed legally by order of Adolph Hitler on the 13th of June 1934 against rebellion.

Q I won't argue with you about words, as to whether those murders of June were murders or not. I am going to suggest to you, you trained these young men to be killers.

A. I only educated these men later on and I didn't train them to be murderers but to be soldiers.

XXX

17

H1018 - 0014

Q Did the Waffen SS know of the bioligical experiments of Dr. Rascher?

A I know nothing of these experiments.

Q Did the Waffen SS know anything about the atrocities in the concentration camps?

A It was the same ignorance which prevailed among the Waffen SS and ~~xxxxx~~ as did generally in the German people. Heinrich Himmler made always a special secret.

Q Did you personally know about these things during the war?

A I never knew anything. If we had known this face of Heinrich Himmler then certainly the experiments would have come to an end.

Q I have a final question. As Chief of an Army group you commanded units of the army, as well as units of the Waffen SS?

A In the mass I commanded divisions of the army and only a few divisions of the Waffen SS.

Q Have you been assigned the task as military expert to describe the fighting on the Western front?

A Yes, ever since the beginning of January, 1946, I worked in the history division of the war department.

(A ten minute recess is taken)

Com B
2 - 2
Cook
1500 - 1600
19 July 1946
Hausser

A-2

H1018 - 0015

CROSS EXAMINATION

BY MR. ELWYN JONES:

Q Witness, you joined the Verfruegungstruppe in 1934, didn't you?

A Yes, as a commander of that school in 1934.

Q Did you tell them how they ought to carry out the killing of these Jews in 1934? Was that part of the training you gave them in your Verfruegungstruppe school?

A On the 13th of June, 1934, I was in the SA reserve of the officers and I was not an SS man yet.

Q When did you join? Which month did you join?

A The first of November, 1934.

Q You knew that the SS by then already had a lot of blood on it's hands, didn't you?

A When I joined?

Q Yes.

A Only that blood that was shed legally by order of Adolph Hitler on the 13th of June 1934 against rebellion.

Q I won't argue with you about words, as to whether those murders of June were murders or not. I am going to suggest to you, you trained these young men to be killers.

A. I only educated these men later on and I didn't train them to be murderers but to be soldiers.

Q

13

H1018 - 0016

Q Did you teach them that certain races Nazi Germany desired to turn into slaves, or destroy those who were sub-humans?

A It is tremendous nonsense, all of this talk of inferior races.

Q Did Hitler talk nonsense about it?

A Also he, because the scientific basis was still unsettled.

Q It was tremendous nonsense that resulted in the deliberate killing of six million Jews and millions of Poles, Russians, Czechs and Yugo Slavs and anywhere your troops went, that is the nonsense it was?

A All of that was not done by the Waffen SS but by Heinrich Himmler and a small circle of his men. These things were not in the sphere of our educational program.

Q You have mentioned you have heard Himmler's speech of terror in 1934, was that his Speech of Terror?

A No, that was his speech at Karkov.

I(1)

Q Who was present at that speech in Karkov in April, 1943?

A Part of the Commanders of the troops located around Karkov.

Q How many commanders were there?

A Perhaps fifty.

Q What was their rank?

13

H1018 -0017

A All commanders of regiments or divisions, and below that those who were just not at the front.

Q And I take it that these Commanding officers repeated to their units the words of Himmler?

A I repeat what I said before. That those officers who were present had not the power of expression and did not pass on these words of Himmler to their troops.

Q Now at that Karkov lecture which you heard, Himmler must have made it clear to you he was a mass murderer?

A He was not that stupid, that would have meant the creation of an opposition.

Q Are you seriously saying that, because you are on oath, you know?

A Yes.

Q Now let me read the record of what Himmler said to you and the other officers of the SS that day. I am reading from 1919 PS, Exhibit US 170. I am reading an excerpt from page 3 of the German text. It starts-just to test your interest in murders, you have said Himmler only mentioned terror, and I am suggesting to you he mentioned mass murder. Now as to the Russians, this is what he told you:

"It is my opinion, and here I believe I am speaking to men who already understand this, that we must conduct

H1018 - 0018

the war and our compaign on these lines. XXXXXXXXXXX How can we take the most men from the Russians, dead or alive, we have to do it, by killing them or taking them prisoners and really putting them to work, by endeavoring to take as much control as possible of any land we may occupy, and by leaving empty of people any territory we dispose of and any area we take from the enemy. Actually they must be transported and used as labor in Germany." Did you hear Himmler say that?

A Yes, for the Waffen SS it was only valid that we had to kill and capture men in combat. This was a natural law of war. But we didn't send anybody to the rear. We never shifted any populations and we never administered any conquest.

Q I will just readto you another paragraph that Himmler said to you on that day. It is on page 2 of the English text and it is on page 7 of the German text.

"Anti-semitism is exactly the same as de-lousing, getting rid of lice is not a question of idealogy, it is a matter of cleanliness. In just the same way, anti-semitism for us has not been a question of idealogy but a matter of cleanliness and now will soon have been dealt with. We shall soon be de-loused. We have only 20,000 lice left and then the matter is finished within the whole of Germany." Did you hear Himmler say that?

A It was a matter of bad taste, the whole thing and

H1018 - 0019

we had other tasks to perform than to worry much about expressions like that.

Q You say it was a matter of bad taste? It must have been quite clear to you it was an indication these unfortunate Jewish people were being murdered, wasn't it?

A. He only spoke of Germany, and there was not one word which permits the conclusion of murder. It might have been evacuation or other purposes.

Q Are you seriously saying, witness, you didn't know at that late date, in April, 1943, when already millions of Jews had been murdered, that this murderous program was not going on?

A I still believe that these main atrocities were committed at a later date.

Q What atrocities do you know of that had been committed already then? You stated the main atrocities, tell the Commission what atrocities you knew of on that day?

A I heard about these only after I was taken prisoner. You will have to admit that we who were fighting day by day had other worries to look after and other thoughts to follow other than to verify rumors which might come from anywhere.

Q Did you hear rumors? You admit, do you, you did hear at least rumors about these murders?

Com B
2 - 7
Cook
1500 - 1600
19 July 1946
Hausser

H1018 - 0020

A When I was a prisoner, not before.

Q Yes, but you just stated you were too busy fighting to follow up these rumors, you know. I am taking the words out of your mouth?

A But these rumors did not concern themselves to practice, but to measures being taken at home.

Q As to the conduct of your divisions in their war against Russia, this is what Himmler told you in that April at Karkov. I am now reading from the last paragraph of 1919 PS, which is U S Exhibit 170:

"We have only one task, to stand firm and carry on the struggle without mercy. I will now say again ~~xxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ something which I already today said to the men elsewhere. We will never let that excellent conception, the dread and terrible reputation which proceeded us in the battle for Karkov ~~xxx~~ die, but will constantly add new meaning to it. They can call us what they like in the world, the main thing is that we are enternally loyal, patriotic, steadfast, unconquerable men of the German people and the Fuehrer, the SS of the German Reich."

A. ~~XX~~ I have already stated here that the word "terror" which I remember, was ~~xx~~ attacked by myself.

Q Did you get up in that meeting of the regimental commanders of the SS divisions and attack Himmler?

A I only attacked this single word.

H1018 - 0021

Q You got up in the meeting, did you?

A No.

Q Why not?

A Because soldiers do not do such things, that is with the Supreme Commander, only from man to man.

Q XXX Even though the Supreme Commander is preaching murder and terror, wasn't it your duty as a decent man, which I understand you hold yourself out to be, to protest then and there?

A The word "murder" was never mentioned, and as regards the word "terror" I told him from man to man that our efficiency cannot be derived from terror, but only from each man who is doing his best.

Q What did he say in reply to that?

A That was what he used to say - you don't understand that. That is your conception xx in your capacity as an old General.

Q It appears from 1919 PS that Himmler had in fact been addressing your men in connection with this Karkov business, did he hold a mass meeting of the troops in your divisions?.

A In our conception, the Fuehrer and also the leaders belonged to the men, this is one single conception.

Q Now look here, Himmler says here: "I will now say again something which I have already said again to the men elsewhere". He was at that time addressing the

H1018 - 0022

No.

Q You didn't hear his famous closing speech?

A He had addressed another part of the troops before, but it could only have been a small part because the divisions were on the front.

officers and he was referring there to something he had said to the men, wasn't he?

Q What part of what divisions did he address?

A There were three divisions, the first, second and third SS armored divisions. One part of them was on front duty. He could only have addressed a part of them which were located near Karkov, xxxx some parts of the Leibstandarte. I was not present at that meeting.

Q Did you receive any report of what he said at the meeting?

A No.

Q You didn't hear his famous closing speech?

A No, I was not present when he made that speech and I never did receive it.

Q At what date did Himmler tell you he requested decency in life?

A This was a general principle. I cannot state any exact date.

Q Were you at Metz in 1941 when Hittler addressed the officers of the Liebstandarte of Adolph Hitler?

A No, I was not there and I do not know the speech.

Q Just tell me and the Commissioner what units of the Waffen SS you served in in the course of the war work?

Com B
Take 2, page 1
Cook
1500 - 1600
19 July 1946
Hausser

A-1

offiel

H1018 - 0023

Q Did the Waffen SS know of the bioligical experiments of Dr. Rascher?

A I know nothing of these experiments.

Q Did the Waffen SS know anything about the atrocities in the concentration camps?

A It was the same ignorance which prevailed among the Waffen SS and ~~xxxxx~~ as did generally in the German people. Heinrich Himmler made always a special secret.

Q Did you personally know about these things during the war?

A I never knew anything. If we had known this face of Heinrich Himmler then certainly the experiments would have come to an end.

Q I have a final question. As Chief of an Army group you commanded units of the army, as well as units of the Waffen SS?

A In the mass I commanded divisions of the army and only a few divisions of the Waffen SS.

Q Have you been assigned the task/~~xxx~~ as military expert to describe the fighting on the Western front?

A Yes, ever since the beginning of January, 1946, I worked in the history division of the war department.

(A ten minute recess is taken)

12

H1018-0024

officers and he was referring there to something he had said to the men, wasn't he?

A He had addressed another part of the troops before, but it could only have been a small part because the divisions were on the front.

Q What part of what divisions did he address?

A There were three divisions, the first, second and third SS armored divisions. One part of them was on front duty. He could only have addressed a part of them which were located near Karkov, xxxx some parts of the Leibstandarte. I was not present at that meeting.

Q Did you receive any report of what he said at the meeting?

A No.

Q You didn't hear his famous closing speech?

A No, I was not present when he made that speech and I never did receive it.

Q At what date did Himmler tell you he requested decency in life?

A This was a general principle. I cannot state any exact date.

Q Were you at Metz in 1941 when Hittler addressed the officers of the Liebstandarte of Adolph Hitler?

A No, I was not there and I do not know the speech.

Q Just tell me and the Commissioner what units of the Waffen SS you served in in the course of the war work?

H1018-0025

A I started in the second division.

Q Did this have some name attached to it, name the division?

A It was called the Das Reich.

Q Where did you serve with the Das Reich and on what dates?

A 1940 on the Western front.

H1018-0026

A I started in the second division.

Q Did this have some name attached to it, name the division?

A It was called the Das Reich.

Q Where did you serve with the Das Reich and on what dates?

A 1940 on the Western front.

H1018-0027

Q Which part of the Western Front?

A In Holland, Northern France, and afterwards were were located in Holland. Then during a short time we participated in the campaign of Belgrade, in the year 1941, when we were assigned to the Eastern Front, the central section, until the middle of October 1941.

Q You were still with Das Reich Division?

A Yes.

Q Where, in Russia?

A In the central sector of the front until the middle of October, when I was wounded.

Q When did you go back to serve in the SS, and what unit did you serve in there, and where?

A From July 1942 when the general command was set up and located in France. In January 1943 until August on the Eastern front. Southern part of the Eastern front, second SS Corps; then Northern Italy until the end of the war.

Q Who did you serve with in Northern Italy?

A With the same unit.

Q The Second SS Armored Corps?

A Yes. In the beginning of January in France.

MR MONNERAY: Where?

THE WITNESS: In the Southern Normandy.

BY MR JONES:

Q And that was still with the Second SS

H1018-0028

Armored Corps?

A Yes, but with other divisions under the same general command.

Q Which division were you serving under in Normandy?

A The divisions were subordinated.

Q He was on the Corps staff?

A We had a general command and a corps, which was alternatively subordinate divisions. In Northern France the 9th and 10th SS Divisions were placed under the command of this general command. In March we were transferred to the Eastern front. Southern part of the Eastern front. After the invasion, transferred to Normandy.

Q With your Corps?

A Yes. With the Second Division. On the 28th of June I handed over this corps and I became supreme commander of the 7th Army of the Reichswehr in Normandy. After Falaise I was again wounded. At the end of January 1945 I became supreme commander of the Army Group G, southern part of the Western front. Until the 4th of April, when somebody else took over.

Q Where, exactly, was your Group G in the southern part of the Western front?

A South of Trier, to the border of Switzerland, alternatively partly northward over the Moselle. Then I commanded over the front sector of the Rhine.

H1018-0029

Q Was the Second SS Panzer Division under your command?

A Only in Normandy.

Q In 1944?

A From the end of June onward.

Q Was the SS Panzer Division Hitler Jungen under you in July 1944?

A No.

Q You know their terrible reputation, I take it?

A During my captivity here I heard something unfavorable about it.

Q Never heard anything about them when they were serving very near to your corps in July 1944?

A No. Such a thing you don't hear when the battle is on.

Q The 29th Regiment Division of the Panzer Grenadier -- was that also under you?

A No. Which division is it?

Q We have no information as to the division.

A The Army division, or the SS division?

Q Was the Hermann Goering Division serving under you in Italy?

A No, it was in Southern Italy.

Q Was that a division of the SS?

H1018-0030

A No. It was a division of the Luftwaffe.

Q You have said that the Waffen-SS did not carry out police tasks.

A No.

Q Did you know that in fact the Waffen-SS used to carry out shootings and hangings in the protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia?

A There were, as a matter of fact, a part of the Waffen-SS in Bohemia and Moravia, but what they did when Heydrich was killed I do not know.

Q This was before Heydrich was killed. Did you know that Juettner, SS Gruppenfuehrer and General Lieutenant of the WAffen-SS wrote you on the 4th of October 1941, all battalions of the Waffen-SS in the protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, will be brought forth for shootings and relative for the supervision of hangings. And then this Document 1972-PS, US 471, then lists for Prague, 99 shootings; 21 hangings in Ehrie 24 shootings, 17 hangings, total 1911 executions, including 16 Jews.

A I cannot know anything about it because it was on that very day that I was wounded on the Eastern front.

H1018-0031

Q Who was this man Juettner. He belonged to the SS Fuehrungshauptamt, didn't he?

A Juettner was a chief of the SS Fuehrungshauptamt. There was our central administrative office in Berlin.

Q And I am suggesting to you that that is a typical illustration of the fact that whenever executionists were needed the men of the Waffen-SS were used as executioners or hangmen.

I (4)

A I claim the contrary. These units as were used as executioners were police units and reservist units.

Q But perfectly under the direction of the Headquarters of the SS?

A I do not know under whose direction they were in the protectorate. Probably under the command of the Waffen-SS in Bohemia and Moravia.

Q Do you know that the members of the SD and the Gestapo and other of the instruments of terror were drawn from the Waffen-SS?

A I don't believe that. They only had a same uniform. And I can only repeat that SS only means Himmler and a small clique of criminals around Himmler.

Q You see, this is what Guenther Dalquen, who wrote the history of the SS, says in Document 2284-PS,

H1018-0032

speaking of the verfuegungstruppe: Those chosen SS troops trained during four years' service under the severest conditions offers equally the best rising generations for future leaders and subordinate leaders of the GeneralSS, the Police, and the Security Service.
Do you agree with that?

A I don't understand.

Q (The question is repeated to the witness)

A That was probably the idea of Guenther Dalquen and the idea of Himmler, that later on the future men should be drafted from those verfuegnungstruppe.

MR JONES: No further questions.

MR MONNERAY: I have a few questions.

BY MR. MONNERAY:

Q Do you maintain that you have no knowledge of the use of Waffen-SS units against civilian population, is that right?

A I don't know what you mean by the word "used"; of course, the Waffen-SS could be assigned to such taks as fighting against partisans but actually as an executionist - they were never used.

I (4)

Q So one of the units of the Waffen-SS was engaged in the task of fighting partisans, is that right?

A All that I can say is that this was one of the tasks of the SS in the front; but it was not a typical

H1018-0033

task, just the same as it was a task of the regular army.

Q Do you know of any units of the German organization that specialized in fighting partisans?

A No. These were Security Division, Landesschutzen Division - older age groups - which were meant to maintain security in the rear.

Q Do you know that that part of the Waffen-SS were active in France on resistence movements?

A I only heard of one isolated case in Southern France. We who were in Normandy had no need to fight partisans.

Q What was an isolated case?

A I only heard of it here -- it was Oradour.

Q Did you follow what was happening to your former division....

A Yes -- I knew in which territory they were fighting.

Q Do you know that your division was active in the operations in France?

A I only know that I arrived from Southern France in Normandy, isolated in single groups, and too late.

Q And why did they arrive too late? This division -- why did it arrive too late?

A Because the Army in the south only released them because they expected landings in the south.

H1018-0034

Q So that this division made a report about the circumstances of carrying preparations through France, is that correct?

A Perhaps to the commander of their division, but not to me, who was a commander of the Army group.

Q If they had met any fighting or any enemy activity, had they to report to the Army?

A No.

Q So that you maintain that the Army had no interest at all in the question whether or not a part of the Army, of the Division, met with enemy activities?

A Only to their own commander, that particular division, the First Army, but not to me.

Q And you were under which Army?

A I had the Seventh Army in Normandy.

Q And you had no knowledge of what was going on in other parts of France?

A If somebody goes too far in his own self-defense then he doesn't tell it on, and nobody told me anything.

Q What are you talking now about self-defense?

A Because I heard it here in captivity that this was an Army secret and the troops kept it to themselves.

DR PELCKMANN: No, interpreter, he didn't say an Army secret. He said "this was a secret Army." Correct that.

H1018-0035

BY MR MONNERAY:

Q Was the First Army also a Waffen-SS formation?

A The SS itself had armies at the close of the war. The Seventh Army I commanded was a group of the

H1018-0036

regular Army of the Reichswehr.

DR PELCKMANN: And so was the First Army?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

BY MR MONNERAY:

Q So you do not know whether the parts of the Division SS had set tasks against resistence movements in France?

A I don't know that. It is possible that local commanders gave orders to such an effect.

Q And the local commanders of those divisions were commanded to do so, and according to general instructions, were they not?

A How far these orders went I could'nt supervise. Of course, they had to defend themselves.

DR PELCKMANN: Correction there. The witness didn't say he "couldn't". He meant he "can't".

MR MONNERAY:

Q In your own army command did you give any instructions as far as the civilian population was concerned?

A No.

Q You were not interested at all in the attitude of the civilian population behind your lines, were you?

H1018-0037

A In the battles of the Normandy the civilian population was gone for the greatest part -- there were only small parts. And with the Army, Group G, were in German territory.

MR MONNERAY: No further questions.

THE COMMISSIONER: Any questions, defense counsel?

DR PELCKMANN: Four or five.

BY DR PELCKMANN:

A I still have to go back to what the representative of the French prosecution said in order to clarify matters.

What did you hear about fats - which some part of the Waffen-SS had - on their way from the southern part of France to the Normandy front?

A In the disposition of the accusation I believe I heard about three cases.

Q You only heard about it after the cessation of hostilities?

A Yes.

Q Is it the fact that you didn't know about these incidents that have happened before the arrival of these troops at the battle front?

CORRECTION BY INTERPRETER TO COMMISSIONER: "That these troops were not under your command at all before they arrived in Normandy." Change that.

H1018-0038

A Of course, I didn't get any report from them because they were not under my command before their arrival.

Q Can one conclude from the fact that you had no knowledge of these incidents, that you never cared about operations in battle of parts or small units of your troops?

A I could only take care of those divisions which were under my command, while there were about 30 or 40 divisions on all battle fronts.

Q Is it correct that you took care of those troops which were under your command and that in their turn they did report to you about their actions.

A It was my duty to be interested in the methods of fighting of those troops under my command.

Q May I repeat the question. Is it the duty of these troops, and on your part as well, to report to you and to higher quarters again?

A They had to report if there were crimes or offenses. The commander had to report to higher authority. They had to report as regards actions; as regards crimes their superior had to make a report.

Q Can you reaffirm that you did your duty as far as you told us now, and can you reaffirm that your commanders subordinated to you did their duty?

A Yes.

H1018-0039

Q Did you care about the attitude of your troops towards the French civilian populations, or the Russian or Polish civilian populations?

A Everywhere the troops lived with the population, and good treatment always pays. We met with these experiences in the East as well as in the west.

Q Did you give appropriate instructions to the troops?

A These instructions are part and parcel of the preparation and it was taught according to the rules of the general convention, the Hague Rules.

Q Did you receive reports of a general bad behavior of your troops toward the civilian population?

A Isolated cases were punished. Generally the relationship was good.

Q You told us that you heard the speech of Himmler at Charkow. Was it the only speech of Himmler you heard during the war?

A No, he was already with the Division in Holland in 1940, where he also spoke to the leaders and commanders.

Q Did the men or the officers hear such speeches rather frequently or was it that you heard these speeches just once or twice during the war?

H1018-0040

A For the commanders and leaders it was once or twice. For the men, it was almost never.

Q Just before you heard a report about those hangings and shootings of Juettner on the 14th of October 1941 in Bohemia and Moravia -- U. S. 471 -- do you know that this report of Juettner is the first report in which he complains of the use of Waffen-SS units for these executions?

A I don't know it. I can understand it.

CORRECTION BY A THIRD INTERPRETER: That was "I very well understand it." Change that.

Q Do you know that this report was made only with the purpose of giving reason for their complaint?

A I cannot know that, because I was elsewhere.

DR PELCKMANN. Thank you.

The witness was dismissed.

A recess declared
until the next day.

H1018-0041

The foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the testimony of General Paul Hausser taken on 19 July 1946.

Mabel A. Lesser
Reporter (pp 1-11)

Rosel V. Cook
Reporter (pp 12-21)

Genevieve Boolse
Reporter (pp 22-35)

CERTIFIED TO:

A. Martin-Howard
Commissioner

Commissioner

H1018-0042

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF TESTIMONY FOR THE DEFENSE OF ORGANIZATIONS, TAKEN BEFORE A COMMISSION APPOINTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH 4 OF THE ORDER OF THE TRIBUNAL DATED 13 MARCH 1946.

19 July 1946.

COMMISSIONER:

H. Martin-Havard.

THE S.S.

(THE COMMISSION CONVENED AT 1410 HOURS.)

GENERAL OBERST PAUL HAUSSER, a witness, took the stand and testified as follows:

BY THE COMMISSIONER:

Q What is your name?

A Paul Hausser.

Q Raise your right hand and repeat the following oath after me:

I swear by God, the Almighty and Omniscient, that I will speak the pure truth and will withhold and add nothing.

(The witness repeated the oath.)

THE COMMISSIONER: You may sit down.

DIRECT EXAMINATION

By DR. PELCKMANN:

Q Witness, what was your last position in the service and your last rank?

A My last rank was that of a General Oberst and I was Commander-in-Chief of Army Group G in the southern part of the Western Front.

Q What rank did you occupy when you left the Reichswehr?

A I left the Reichswehr on the 1st of February 1932 and at that time I had the rank of a "General Lieutenant."

Q How did you come to the SS Verfuegungstruppe?

A I joined the Stahlhelm organization in the year 1933. At that time I was not a member of the Party. I was then transferred to the Reserve of the SA and at a congress of the leaders I met Gruppenfuehrer Scharfe who called the attention of the Reichsfuehrer-SS Himmler to me. In the fall of 1934 I received an order from Himmler to organize the SS-Junker School at

H1018-0043

Braunschweig.

Q So you became a member of the Verfuegungstruppe of the SS in 1934, yes or no?

A Yes.

Q Could your position in the SS Verfuegungstruppe before the war be considered as a key position.

A From the year 1936 onwards I was not commander of the Verfuegungstruppe but Inspector of the Verfuegungstruppe and it was my task to take care of the education and instruction of this Troop, with the exception of the so-called Leibstandarte. Apart from that, problems of organization, according to the orders of Himmler, came under my jurisdiction.

Q Whose idea was it to set up this Verfuegungstruppe and for what purpose was it set up?

A I did not witness the beginning of this Troop. I only know that it became sort of a bodyguard and emanated from the Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler. Later on a few other battalions were set up particularly for representative tasks and probably also for the purpose of leading the many unemployed to a regular life.

Q Was the ordinary SS not sufficient for this task and why not?

A As far as I know the SS was neither, as regards quantity and as regards appearance, sufficient for these tasks. We wanted a special troop for this purpose.

Q Was it the intention of the order of August 17, 1938, Document 647-PS, USA Exhibit 443, - was it the purpose of this order to create a new troop apart from the Ordinary-SS?

A No. This order was meant to clarify the uncertain position of the existing troops and it was especially on the initiative of the OKH (The Supreme Command of the Army). This order provided for the specific tasks of the several contingencies which were mentioned in this order; for instance it stipulated that they were neither a part of the police or a part of the Wehrmacht. They were a permanent troop and that compulsory military service could be done in this troop.

Q Was this order meant to be a general connection between the Ordinary-SS the Totenkopfverbanden (Death Head Unit) and the Verfuegungstruppe?

H1018-0044

A No, on the contrary, the order clearly distinguished between the tasks of the several conti gencies and so there was no connection.

Q Could this order be interpreted in the sense that the Death Head Unit and the Verfuegungstruppe were true to the State, whereas the Ordinary-SS had more of a Party character?

A Yes, that is right.

Q Was the SS Verfuegungstruppe meant to be a political nucleus?

A No, it had nothing to do with politics; only its members had a right to choose. It was merely an attempt. In this troop all the virtues of a soldier should be combined with the new thoughts of the present.

Q Does that refer to relation between officer and enlisted man?

A Yes, reference to all social questions, better connection between officer and enlisted man, stressing of comradeship and unity, a rejection of any exclusivity and a rejection of the privilege for education.

Q Did the leaders of the Verfuegungstruppe ever try to promote the thought of an aggressive war and to educate the Verfuegungstruppe in this sense?

A No. The tasks of the young troop demanded for a long period of peace. The commanders were all veterans of the first world war and they did not wish to repeat this war.

Q At that time you were Inspector of the Verfuegungstruppe and I think you had the rank of a Standartenfuehrer?

A Yes.

Q In this capacity had you any knowledge of the tactical assignment of the Verfuegungstruppe in case of war?

A My task consisted only in the education and instruction of the troop and had nothing to do with its assignment.

Q Were there any preparations within the Verfuegungstruppe for assignment before the war ?

A There were no such preparations before the war. We were not ready for war. We had no heavy arms, we had no reserve officers, no reserve enlisted men, no general staff.

Q Had you any connection with the General Staff of the Wehrmacht?

H1018-0045

A No, not with the General Staff of the Wehrmacht, only on questions of organization and instruction, because the instruction of the Verfuegungstruppe was subject to jurisdiction of the army.

Q Were there any discussions within the Verfuegungstruppe as to the aggression against neighboring states or were there any discussions with other organizations under the jurisdiction of Himmler?

A We had no such discussion. We did not discuss this point. I have already stressed the point that our tasks demanded for a long period of peace.

Q What were the relations of the Verfuegungstruppe before the war towards the other organizations which were under the influence of Himmler?

A We had only one thing in common, that was the command of Heinrich Himmler. We had all our own tasks. Our relations to the Ordinary-SS were only of a local nature and especially in the field of comradeship. With all other organizations we hadno relations. I may say that I have spoken perhaps twelve words with Heydrich in my whole life.

Q Were the members of the Verfuegungstruppe recruited from the Ordinary-SS?

A Only in 1933 when the troop was set up, a part of it was recruited from the Ordinary-SS. Then we set up propaganda agencies and we recruited our members from the part of the population which was due for military service. In particular all officers and commanders came from the old Wehrmacht and from the Party but not from the Ordinary-SS.

Q Was there a special Supreme Command provided for the Waffen-SS in the war and what were the relations towards the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht.

A The Waffen-SS had for its assignment no Supreme Command of its own. Only in the administrative office, the so-called Fuehrungshauptamt, for some fields of activity the members of the Waffen-SS became, when the war started, members of the Army. During my 5½ years at the Front I received orders only from the Army agencies.

Q What was the competence of Himmler as regards the Waffen-SS in war?

A We were only subordinate to Heinrich Himmler in questions of

H1018-0046

personnel jurisdiction. As regards reserves and clothing, there was a special signal service for this purpose.

Q Was there a definite plan for therecruitment of the Waffen-SS as regards quantity and was it planned that the number of SS men should not exceed 10% of the army strength?

A I think that the increment did not correspond to a plan. It was a consequence of the fact that these divisions had proved to be good soldiers and that in the course of the war and especially during crises the soldier had to go through many proofs and he had to be a good soldier. In addition to that we had, from 1943

H1018-0047

onwa rds, divisions which consisted of volunteers of the Nordic countries, of so-called Volksdeutsche (members of the German people) and volunteers from the Eastern and from the Balkan States. At that time too we never exceeded the 10% of the A rmy.

Q In your capacity as a soldier, and here I want to refer to the preceding question, whom did you consider as your direct commander, Himmler or Hitler?

A Our Supreme Commander was Hitler. We always reserved ourselves a certain criticism towards Himmler.

Q Was the greater part of the Waffen-SS volunteers?

A In peace time, yes. In war time part of the Waffen-SS was recruited by virtue of the so-called emergency law (Notstands-gesetz.) The rest of them were volunteers with the following exceptions: In the year 1941, one division received 800 reservists from the army; in the year 1942 in the divisions which were placed under my command, there was perhaps already one-third of drafted men, that is to say, not volunteers. The number of drafted men increased in the year 1943 to almost one-half. In the year 1944 it probably exceeded one-half.

Q Were the volunteer recruitments based on ideological grounds?

A No, these men were much too young in order to understand that. They were looking for a good troop, which was recognized. They wanted to serve a mechanized or armored troop.

Q These young men of whom you speak came, I think, from labor camps and from Hitler Youth?

A They were young men who had to do military service and who had already done labor service and were members of the Hitler Youth.

Q As regards the Wehrmacht, was it just like that, that the young men they recruited were from the labor camps and from the Hitler Youth?

A Yes, it was the same procedure also in the army, volunteers which were in most cases assigned to mechanized divisions, armored divisions, parachutists, and so on.

H1018-0048

Q Was the Waffen-SS educated with a view to specially cruel fighting and were such methods of cruel fighting taught in the education?

A I must answer that with a clear "No." The instructions was supervised and directed by the Army. The commanders knew very well that this new troop had still to prove their qualities. It was also the demand of Heinrich Himmler who always said: " I request decency in life and in fight." I think at least the commanders have done this as regards to their own person.

Q In the years 1943 and 1944 it is difficult still to speak of a "young" troop. Do you think this is the reason why the decent methods of fighting these principles announced by Himmler, have changed?

A The tremendous growth of the troop of course deteriorated the efficiency and personality of the troop. In the year 1940 we had 3 divisions. There were always new formations and in the long run we had already 30 divisions. In addition to that we had difficulties with the volksdeutsche (members of the German people) and volunteers who did not properly know the German language, so that the divisions we had at the end cannot be compared with the divisions we had in the beginning. This would be the case everywhere after a long war.

Q Can you say, in spite of this, that the principle was still not to violate International Law and not to fight cruelly?

A The principles, according to the Geneva Convention and to the Hague Convention, remained the same. I unfortunately remember a speech made by Heinrich Himmler, in 1943, in which he mentioned the word "terror." It was meant terror which should proceed our troops. I told him that our success did not depend on terror but on every man doing his best. Besides it was stupid to speak of terror, for an enemy who knows about that is so much the tougher.

Q Was the Commissar Order (Kommissarbefehl) executed by the Waffen-SS?

H1018-0049

A The Commissar Order was only passed as Chefsache to the General commands. In 1941 the Waffen-SS had no general commands of its own. I personally did not receive this order from General Command of the Army. I only received an order, much later, which spoke about the separation of the Commissars. We could not recognize the Commissars. I cannot remember one single case in which the capture of a Commisar was reported. Whenever they were recognized as such the fact was made known by the report of another prisoner.

Q Could one say that the violation of the principles of human dignity were a consequence of the expressions of Himmler?

A I have already mentioned the speech of 1943. Heinrich Himmler almost never spoke to a troop as such. He spoke to a part of his commanders and leaders who were in a position to translate his often very strong words into the language of the soldier.

Q Do you think there were other reasons why violations of International Law and excesses against human dignity should take place?

A In a long war such things always happen. The persons who committed such crimes were also punished according to the laws of the army. Of course toward the end of the war the young commanders of companies, with short experience in the army, had a bad influence on the whole situation.

Q Do you think that this was also the reason that the enemy were also very tough and violated certain conventions?

COMMISSIONER MARTIN-HAVARD: This question is entirely immaterial. We are faced with the problem of ascertaining whether the organizations accused were criminal or not. Will you please pass on to the next question?

DR. PELCKMANN: I shall pass on to the next question but I should like to be permitted to explain why I have put this question.

COMMISSIONER MARTIN-HAVARD: I think that we have only a very short time and as the whole question is immaterial it is overruled and I request you to pass on to the next question.

Q How [illegible] the psychological influence of Himmler on the Waffen-SS?

H1018-0050

A I think that Himmler wanted to teach the Waffen-SS his ideological opinions. A troop which is on the front has a very critical sense as regards expressions of leaders in the Homeland. For the most part the utterances of Himmler had no great influence on the troops because they were passed on to the troops through intermediation of the commanders and they knew what to tell the soldiers.

Q Could you quote the attitude of Heinrich Himmler as hostile to the troop? Was it recognized as such by the troop itself?

A Heinrich Himmler by all means was an officer but he had no idea of military tasks proper and he under-estimated the real work within a general staff. This the troops knew and accordingly had their own opinion of him.

Q How can it be explained that in spite of the lack of knowledge of Heinrich Himmler, the troops performed such good feats?

A In the beginning the troops consisted entirely of volunteers who had a very strong sense of cooperation and the relationship between leaders and led was excellent. The instructors were men who came from the Regular Army and had experience from the first world war and used that experience to train the new troops.

Q What was the relationship of the Waffen-SS to the police activities of Heinrich Himmler, especially relating to the Gestapo and the concentration camps?

A We had no connection whatever with these organizations. It was an intentional deceit of Heinrich Himmler that these guards in the concentration camps were called Waffen-SS, for budgetary reasons only because they were only relieved from service with the Wehrmacht for that reason. There was no exchange of personnel and there were no contacts with the Gestapo, Sipo and Sd either.

Q Were the guard companies in the concentration camps just referred to called Waffen-SS as well?

A That expression was used in the central agencies in Berlin. During the actions I never knew that they were calling themselves Waffen-SS.

H1018-0051

Q Did the Verfuegungstruppe or the Waffen-SS either before the war or during the war have any police funtion and did Higher-SS and Police officials belong to the leadership?

A The Verfuegungstruppe and Waffen-SS never performed police tasks, only the Death Head Brigades before the war. The Higher-SS and Police Leaders were Generals of Police. Only in the year 1944 these generals became SS Generals too when Himmler became Supreme Commander of the Home Army and as such got control of the prison camps of the Wehrmacht; according to the general convention, these were supposed to be only members of the armed forces.

Q What did you know during the war about the so-called Einsatzgruppe or "disposition squads?"

A I knew the same as probably the leaders of the Regular Army know, that is, that Himmler put parts of the SD into the ranks of the Regular Army with the task to requisition material and supervise the civil population. Only during my imprisonment did I learn that within these Einsatzgruppe were also small parts of the Waffen-SS, altogether perhaps three or four companies, that is 600 men, for real protective tasks.

Q Was the fighting against the partisans a special task of the Waffen-SS?

A That fighting was not a special task of the Waffen-SS. The fight against the partisans was a matter of military police far behind the lines which was performed by agencies of the Army, by security divisions, by Landesschutzenverbande, as well by generals of the army as by local leaders of the SS and Police, with police regiments, and in exceptional cases also with Waffen-SS if it was just in the area. The divisions themselves always were used at the front.

CROSS EXAMINATION

BY MR. ELWYN JONES:

Q Witness, you joined the Verfuregungstruppe in 1934, didn't you?

A Yes, as a commander of that school in 1934.

Q Did you tell them how they ought to carry out the killing

H1018-0052

of those Jews in 1934? Was that part of the training you gave them in your Vorfruegungstruppe school?

A On the 13th of June, 1934, I was in the SA reserve of the officers and I was not an SS man yet.

Q When did you join? Which month did you join?

A The first of November, 1934.

Q You knew that the SS by then already had a lot of blood on it's hands, didn't you?

A When I joined?

Q Yes.

A Only that blood that was shed legally by order of Adolf Hitler on the 13th of June 1934 against rebellion.

Q I won't argue with you about words, as to whether those murders of June were murders or not. I am going to suggest to you, you trained these young men to be killers.

A I only educated these men later on and I didn't train them to be murderers but to be soldiers.

H1018-0053

Q Did the Waffen SS know of the bioligical experiments of Dr. Rascher?

A I know nothing of these experiments.

Q Did the Waffen SS know anything about the atrocities in the concentratio. camps?

A It was the same ignorance which prevailed among the Waffen SS and as did generally in the German people. Heinrich Himmler made always a special secret.

Q Did you personally know about these things during the war?

A I never knew anything. If we had known this face of Heinrich Himmler then certainly the experiments would have come to an end.

Q I have a final question. As Chief of an Army group you commanded units of the army, as well as units of the Waffen SS?

A In the mass I commanded divisions of the army and only a few divisions of the Waffen SS.

Q Have you been assigned the task as military expert to describe the fighting on the western front?

A Yes, ever since the beginning of January, 1946, I worked in the history division of the war department.

(A ten minute recess is taken)

CROSS EXAMINATION

BY MR ELWYN JONES:

Q Witness, you joined the Verfruegungstruppe in 1934, didn't you?

A Yes, as a caommander of that school in 1934.

Q Did you tell them how they ought to carry out the killing of these Jews in 1934? Was that part of the training you gave them in your Verfruegungstruppe school?

A On the 13th of June, 1934, I was in the SA reserve of the officers and I was not an SS man yet.

Q When did you join? Which month did you join?

A The first of November, 1934.

Q You knew that the SS by then already had a lot of blood on it's hands, didn't you?

A When I joined?

H1018-0054

Q Yes.

A Only that blood that was shed legally by order of Adolph Hitler on the 13th of June 1934 against rebellion.

Q I won't argue with you about words, as to whether those murders of June were murders or not. I am going to suggest to you, you trained these young men to be killers.

A I only educated these men later on and I didn't train them to be murderers, but to be soldiers.

Q Did you teach them that certain races Nazi Germany desired to turn into slaves, or destroy those who w[illegible] humans?

A It is tremendous nonsense, all of this talk of inferior races.

Q Did Hitler talk nonsense about it?

A Also he, because the scientific basis was still unsettled.

Q It was tremendous nonsense that resulted in the deliberate killing of six million Jews and millions of Poles, Russians, Czechs and Yugo Slavs and anywhere your troops went, that is the nonsense it was?

A All of that was not done by the Waffen SS but by Heinrich Himmler and a small circle of his men. These things were not in the sphere of our educational program.

Q You have not mentioned you have heard Himmler's speech of terror in 1934, was that his speech of terror?

A No, that was his speech at Karkov.

Q Who was present at that speech in Karkov in April, 1943?

A Part of the Commanders of the troops located around Karkov.

Q How many commanders were there?

A Perhaps fifty.

Q What was thir rank?

A All commanders of regiments or divisions, and below that those who were just not at the front.

Q And I take it that these Commanding officers repeated to their units the words of Himmler?

A I repeat what I said before. that those officers who were present had not the power of expression and did not pass on these words of Himmler to their troops.

Q Now at that Karkov lecture which you heard, Himmler must have made it clear to you he was a mass murderer?

A He was not that stupid, that would have meant the creation of an opposition.

Q Are you seriously saying that, because you are on oath, you know?

A Yes.

Q Now let me read the record of what Himmler said to you and the other officers of the SS that day. I am reading from 1919 PS, Exhibit US 170. I am

H1018-0055

reading an excerpt from page 3 of the German text. It statrts-just to test your interests in murders, you have said Himmler only mentioned terror, and I am suggesting to you he mentioned mass murder. Now as to the Russians, this is what he told you.

"It is my opinion, and here I believe I am speaking to men who already undrstand this, that we must conduct the war and our compaign on these lines. How can we take the most men from the Russians, dead or alive, we have done it, by killing them or taking them prisoners and really putting them to work, by endeavoring to take as much control as possible af any land we may occupy, and by leaving empty of people any territory we dispose of and any are we take from the enemy. Actually they must be transported and used as labor in Germany." Did you hear Himmler say that?

A Yes, for the Waffen SS it was only valid that we had to kill and capture men in combat. This was a natural law of war. But we didn't send anybody to the rear. We never shifted any populations and we never administered any conques

Q I will just read to you another paragraph that Himmler said to you on that day. It is on page 2 of the English text and it is on page 7 of the German test. "Anti-semitism is exactly the same as de-lousing, getting rid of lice is not a question of idealogy, it is a matter of cleanliness. In just the same way, anti-semitism for us has not been a question of ideology but a matter of cleanliness and now will soon have to be dealt with. We shall soon be de-loused. We have only 20,000 lice left and then the matter is finished within the whole of Germany." Did you hear Himmler say that?

A It was a matter of bad taste, the whole thing and we had other tasks to perform than to worry much about expressions like that.

Q. You say it was a matter of bad taste? It must have been quite clear to you it was an indication these unfortunate Jewish people were murdered, wasn't it?

A. He only spoke of Germany, and there was not one qword which permits the conclusion of murder. It might have been evacuation or other purposes.

Q. Are you seriously saying, qitness, you didn't know at that late date, in April 1943, when already millions of Jews had been murdered, that this murderous program was not going on?

H1018-0056

A I still believe that these main atrocities were committed at allater date.

Q What atrocities do you know of that had been committed already then? You stated the main atrocities, tell the Commission what atrocities you knew of on that day?

A I heard about these only after I was taken prisoner. You will have to admit that we who were fighting day by day had other worries to look after and other thoughts to follow other than to verify rumors which might come from anywhere.

Q Did you hear rumors? You admit, do you, you did at least hear rumors about these murders?

A When I was a prisoner, not before.

Q Yes, but you just stated you were too busy fighting to follow up these rumors, you know. I am taking the words out of your mouth?

A But these rumors did not concern themselves to practice, but to measure being taken at home.

Q As to the conduct of your divisions in their war against Russia, this is what Himmler told you in that April at Karkov. I am now reading from the last paragraph of 1919 PS, which is U.S. Exhibit 170:

" We have only one task, to stand firm and carry on the struggle without mercy. I will now say again something which I already today said to the men elsewhere. We will never let that excellent conception, the dread and terrible reputation which proceeded us in the battle for Karkov die, but will constantly add new meaning to it. They can call us what they like in the world, the main thing is that we are enternally loyal, patriotic, steadfast, unconquerable men of the German people and the Fuehrer, the SS of the German Reich."

A I have already stated here that the word "terror" which I remember, was attacked by myself.

Q Did you get up in that meeting of the regimental commanders of the SS divisions and attack Himmler?

A I only attacked this single word.

Q You got up in the meeting, did you?

A No.

Q Why not?

H1018-0057

A because soldiers do not do such things, that is with the Supreme Commander. only from man to man.

Q Even though the Supreme Commander is preaching murder and terror, wasn't it your duty as a decent man, which I understand you hold yourself out to be, to protest then and there?

A The word "murder" was never mentioned, and as regards the word "terror" I told him from man to man that our efficiency cannot be derived from terror. but only from each man who is doing his best.

Q What did he say in reply to that?

A That was what he used to say - you don't understand that. That is your conception in your capacity as an old General.

Q It appears from 1919 PS that Himmler had in fact been addressing your men in connection with this Karkov business, did he hold a mass meeting of the troops in your divisions?

A In our conception, the Fuehrer and also the leaders belonged to the men this is one single conception.

Q Now look here, Himmler says here: "I will now say again something which I have already said again to the men elsewhere". He was at that time addressing the officers and he was referring there to something he had said to the men, wasn't he?

A He had addressed another part of the troops before, but it could have been a small part because the divisions were on the front.

Q What part of what divisions did he address?

A There were three divisions, the first, second and third SS armored divisions. One part of them was on front duty. He could only have addressed a part of them which were located near Karkov, some parts of the Leibstandarte I was not present at that meeting.

Q Did you receive any report of what he said at the meeting?

A No.

Q You didn't hear his famous closing speech?

A No, I was not present when he made that speech and I never did receive it

Q At what date did Himmler tell you he requested decency in life?

A This was a general principle. I cannot state any exact date.

Q Were you at Metz in 1941 when Hitler addressed the officers of the

H1018-0058

Liebstandarte of Adolph Hitler?

A No, I was not there and I do not know the speech.

Q Just tell me and the Commissioner what units of the affen SS you served in, in the course of the war work?

A I statrted in the second division.

Q Did this have some name attached to it, name the division?

A It was called the Das Reich.

Q Where did you serve with the Das Reich and on what dates?

A 1940 on the Western front.

H1018-0059

H1018-0060

Q. Which part of the Western Front?

A. In Holland, Northern France, and afterwards were located in Holland. Then during a short time we participated in the campaign of Belgrade, in the year 1941, when we were assigned to the Eastern Front, the central section, until the middle of October 1941.

Q. You were still with Das Reich Division?

A. Yes.

Q. Where, in Russia?

A. In the central sector of the front until the middle of October, when I was wounded.

Q. When did you go back to serve in the SS, and what unit did you serve in there, and where?

A. From July 1942 when the general command was set up and located in France. In January 1943 until August on the Eastern front. Southern part of the Eastern front, second SS Corps; then Northern Italy until the end of the war.

Q. Who did you serve with in Northern Italy?

A. With the same unit.

Q. The Second SS Armored Corps?

A. Yes. In the beginning of January in France.

MR. MONNERAY: Where?

THE WITNESS: In the Southern Normandy.

BY MR. JONES:

Q. And that was still with the Second SS Armored Corps?

A. Yes, but with other divisions under the same general command.

Q. Which division were you serving under in Normandy?

A. The divisions were subordinated.

Q. He was on the Corps staff?

A. We had a general command and a corps, which was alternatively subordinate divisions. In Northern France the 9th and 10th SS Divisions were played under the command of this general command. In March we were transferred to the Eastern front. Southern part of the Eastern front. After the invasion,

H1018-0061

transferred to Normandy.

Q. With your Corps?

A. Yes. With the Second Division. On the 28th of June I handed over this corps and I became supreme commander of the 7th Army of the Reichswehr in Normandy. After Falaise I was again wounded. At the end of January 1945 I became supreme commander of the Army Group G, sourther part of the Western front. Until the 4th of April, when somebody else took over.

Q. Where, exactly, was your Group G in the southern part of the Western front?

A. South of Trier, to the border of Switzerland, alternatively partly northward over the Moselle. Then I commanded over the front sector of the Rhine.

Q. Was the Second SS Panzer Division under your command?

A. Only in Normandy.

Q. In 1944?

A. From the end of June onward.

Q. Was the SS Panzer Division Hitler Jungen under you in July 1944?

A. No.

Q. You know their terrible reputation, I take it?

A. During my captivity here I heard something unfavorable about it.

Q. Never heard anything about them when they were serving very near to your corps in July 1944?

A. No. Such a thing you don't hear when the battle is on.

Q. The 29th Regiment Division of the Panzer Grenadier -- was that also under you?

A. No. Which division is it?

Q. We have no information as to the division.

A. The Army division, or the SS division?

Q. Was the Hermann Goering Division serving under you in Italy?

A. No, it was in Southern Italy.

Q. Was that a division of the SS?

A. No. It was a division of the Luftwaffe.

H1018-0062

Q. You have said that the Waffen-SS did not carry out police tasks.

A. No.

Q. Did you know that in fact the Waffen-SS used to carry out shootings and hangings in the protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia?

A. There were, as a matter of fact, a part of the Waffen-SS in Bohemia and Moravia, but what they did when Heydrich was killed I do not know.

Q. This was before Heydrich was killed. Did you know that Juettner, SS Gruppenfuehrer and General Lieutenant of the Waffen-SS wrote you on the 4th of October 1941, all battalions of the Waffen*SS in the protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, will be brought forth for shootings and relative for the supervision of hangings. And then this Document 1972-PS, US 471, then lists for Prague, 99 shootings; 21 hangings in Ehrie 24 shootings, 17 hangings, total 1911 executions, including 16 Jews.

A. I cannot know anything about it because it was on that very day that I was wounded on the Eastern front.

Q. Who was this man Juettner. He belonged to the SS Fuehrungshauptamt, didn't he?

A. Juettner was a chief of the SS Fuehrungshauptamt. There was our central administrative office in Berlin.

Q. And I am suggesting to you that that is a typical illustration of the fact that whenever executionists were needed the men of the Waffen-SS were used as executioners or hangmen.

A. I claim the contrary. These units as were used as executioners were police units and reservist units.

Q. But perfectly under the direction of the Headquarters of the SS?

A. I do not know under whose direction they were in the protectorate. Probably under the command of the Waffen-SS in Bohemia and Moravia.

Q. Do you know that the members of the SD and the Gestapo and other of the instruments of terror were drawn from the Waffen-SS ?

A. I don't believe that. They only had a same uniform. And I can only repeat that SS only means Himmler and a small clique of criminals around Hitler.

H1018-0063

Q. You see, this is what Guenther Dalquen, who wrote the history of the SS, says in Document 2284-PS, speaking of the verfuegungstruppe: Those chosen SS troops trained during four years' service under the severest conditions offers equally the best rising generations for future leaders and subordinate leaders of the General SS, the Police, and the Security Service. Do you agree with that?

A. I don't understand.

Q. (The question is repeated to the witness)

A. That was probably the idea of Guenther Dalquen, and the idea of Himmler, that later on the future men should be drafted from those verfuegnungstruppe.

MR. JONES: No further questions.

MR. MONNERAY: I have a few questions.

BY MR. MONNERAY:

Q. Do you maintain that you have no knowledge of the use of Waffen-SS units against civilian population, is that right?

A. I don't know what you mean by the word "used"; of course, the Waffen-SS could be assigned to such tasks as fighting against partisans but actually as an executionist - they were never used.

Q. So one of the units of the Waffen-SS was engaged in the task of fighting partisans, is that right?

A. All that I can say is that this was one of the tasks of the SS in the front; but it was not a typical

H1018-0064

task, just the same as it was a task of the regular army.

Q Do you know of any units of the German organization that specialized in fighting partisans?

A No. These were Security Division, Landesschutzen Division - older age groups - which were meant to maintain security in the rear.

Q Do you know that that part of the Waffen-SS were active in France on resistance movements?

A I only heard of one isolated case in Southern France. We who were in Normandy had no need to fight partisans.

Q What was an isolated case?

A I only heard of it here -- it was Oradour.

Q Did you follow what was happening to your former division,...

A Yes -- I know in which territory they were fighting.

Q Do you know that your division was active in the operations in France?

A I only know that I arrived from Southern France in Normany, isolated in single groups, and too late.

Q And why did they arrive too late? This division -- why did it arrive too late?

A Because the Army in the south only released them because they expected landings in the south.

Q So that this division made report about the circumstances of carrying preparations through France, is that correct?

A Perhaps to the commander of their division, but not to me, who was a commander of the Army group.

Q If they had not any fighting or any enemy activity, had they to report to the Army?

A No.

Q So that you maintain that the Army had no interest at all in the question whether or not a part of the Army, of the Division , met with enemy activities?

A Only to their own commander, that particular division, the First Army, but not to me.

Q And you were under which Army?

A I had the Seventh Army in Normandy.

H1018-0065

Q And you had no knowledge of what was going on in other parts of France?

A If somebody goes too far in his own self-defense then he doesn't tell it on, and nobody told me anything.

Q What are you talking now about self-defense?

A Because I heard it here in captivity that this was an Army secret and the troops kept it to themselves.

DR. PELCKMANN: No, interpreter, he didn't say an Army secret. He said "this was a secret Army." Correct that.

BY MR. MONNERAY:

Q Was the First Army also a Waffen-SS formation?

A The SS itself had armies at the close of the war. The Seventh Army I commanded was a group of the regular Army of the Reichswehr.

DR. PELCKMANN: And so was the First Army?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

BY MR. MONNERAY:

Q So you do not know whether the parts of the Division SS had set tasks against resistance movements in France?

A I don't know that. It is possible that local commanders gave orders to such an effect.

Q And the local commanders of those divisions were commanded to do so, and according to general instructions, were they not?

A How far these orders went I couldn't supervise. Of course, they had to defend themselves.

DR. PELCKMANN: Correction there. The witness didn't say he "couldn't", He meant he "can't".

MR. MONNERAY:

Q In your own army command did you give any instructions as far as the civilian population was concerned?

A No.

Q You were not interested at all in the attitude of the civilian population behind your lines, were you?

A In the battles of the Normandy the civilian population was gone for the greatest part -- there were only small parts. And with the Army, Group G, were in German territory.

H1018-0066

MR. MONNERAY: No further questions.

THE COMMISSIONER: Any questions, defense counsel?

DR. PELCKMANN: Four or five.

BY DR. PELCKMANN:

A I still have to go back to what the representative of the French prosecution said in order to clarify matters.

What did you hear about fights - which some part of the Waffen SS had - on their way from the southern part of France to the Normandy front?

A In the disposition of the accusation I believe I heard about three cases.

Q You only heard about it after the cessation of hostilities?

A Yes.

Q Is it the fact that you didn't know about these incidents that have happened before the arrival of these troops at the battle front?

CORRECTION BY INTERPRETER TO COMMISSIONER: "That these troops were not under your command at all before they arrived in Normandy." Change that.

A Of course, I didn't get any report from them because they were not under my command before their arrival.

Q Can one conclude from that that you had no knowledge of these incidents, that you never cared about operations in battle of parts or small units of your troops?

A I could only take care of those divisions which were under my command, while there were about 30 or 40 divisions on all battle fronts.

Q Is it correct that you took care of those troops which were under your command and that in their turn they did report to you about their actions.

A It was my duty to be interested in the methods of fighting of those troops under my command.

Q May I repeat the question. Is it the duty of these troops, and on your part as well, to report to you and to higher quarters again?

A They had to report if there were crimes or offenses. The commander had to report to higher authority. They had to report as regards actions; as regards crimes their superior had to make a report.

Q Can you reaffirm that you did your duty as far as you told us now, and can you reaffirm that your commanders subordinated to you did their duty?

H1018-0067

A Yes.

Q Did you care about the attitude of your troops towards the French civilian populations, or the Russian or Polish civilian populations?

A Everywhere the troops lived with the population, and good treatment always pays. We met with these experiences in the East as well as in the west.

Q Did you give appropriate instructions to the troops?

A These instructions are part and parcel of the preparation and it was taught according to the rules of the general convention, the Hague Rules.

Q Did you receive reports of a general bad behavior of your troops toward the civilian population?

A Isolated cases were punished. Generally the relationship was good.

Q You told us that you heard the speech of Himmler at Charkow. Was it the only speech of Himmler you heard during the war?

A No, he was already with the Division inHolland in 1940, where he also spoke to the leaders and commanders.

Q Did the men or the officers hear such speeches rather frequently or was it that you heard these speeches just once or twice during the war?

A For the commanders and leaders it was once or twice. For the men, it was almost never.

Q Just before you heard a report about those hangings and shootings of Juettner on the 14th of October 1941 in Bohemia and Moravia -- U.S. 471 -- do you know that this report of Juettner is the first report in which he complains of the use of Waffen-SS units for these executions?

A I don't know it. I can understand it.

CORRECTION BY A THIRD INTERPRETER: That was "I very well understand it." Change that.

Q Do you know that this report was made only with the purpose of giving reason for their complaint?

A I cannot know that, because I was elsewhere.

DR. PELCKMANN: Thank you.

The witness was dismissed.

(A recess declared until the next day.)

H1018-0068

The foregoing is a true and co ect transcript of the testimony of General Paul Hausser taken on 19 ly 1946.

Mabel A. Lesser
Reporter

Rose M. Cook
Reporter

Genevieve Biolsi
Reporter

CERTIFIED TO:

A. Martin-Havard
Commissioner